

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Struggle for the Control of Pakistan: Musharraf Takes On the Islamist Radicals**

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#### **Introduction**

The attacks of September 11, 2001, underscored the fact that Pakistan has been a principal center for international rivals who have sought to attack the United States and its interests overseas. Al Qaeda and the Taliban, as well as Kashmiri and homegrown Pakistani Islamist militant groups, have maintained a presence and popularity in Pakistan, both among sections of the masses and elites. Post-September 11 attacks on the U.S. Consulate in Karachi, the journalist Daniel Pearl and French defense workers also in Karachi, and an Anglican Church congregation in Islamabad have demonstrated that Islamist terrorism is robust in Pakistan's cities. Al Qaeda and Taliban forces have moved from Afghanistan into western Pakistan, where the central government has little control, and some have moved into the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir on the Pakistan side of the Line of Control, where they hope to incite war between India and Pakistan. In response, the U.S. war on terrorism, Operation Enduring Freedom, is being fought inside Pakistan, as well as Afghanistan. Also, the Bush administration is working to stop Islamist militants in Kashmir from drawing Pakistani forces away from the Afghan border or starting a Pakistan-India war that could go nuclear.

Before September 11, 2001, it appeared that Pakistan was on the road to becoming an international rival of the United States. Relations between the military government of Pakistan, led by President/General Pervez Musharraf, and the United States were at a low point. U.S. sanctions

against Pakistan for nuclear weapons development and testing and the 1999 military coup were hurting the economy and the military. The Clinton administration had begun tilting toward Pakistan's enemy, India, and the Bush administration signaled its intention to tilt even further. Pakistan's CIA, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Directorate, was backing the Taliban in Afghanistan, tolerating al Qaeda activities in Afghanistan and western Pakistan, and supporting Islamist militant organizations in Jammu and Kashmir. Islamist extremism within Pakistan was growing, thanks in part to Saudi-funded *madrassas* (Quranic schools) that were producing young militants who were joining or supporting Islamist extremist organizations, including al Qaeda. Islamist Pakistani scientists had established links with al Qaeda in Afghanistan and were assisting in efforts to develop weapons of mass destruction. If the terrorist attacks of September 11 had not occurred, Pakistan would have become increasingly Islamist, a U.S. rival, and perhaps even a candidate for the "axis of evil" list.

The September 11 attacks led the United States to seek from Pakistan basing and overflight rights in order to attack the Taliban and al Qaeda in Afghanistan. At first, it was uncertain if President Musharraf would assist the United States and, particularly, allow U.S. forces on Pakistani soil. However, President Musharraf apparently realized that Pakistan was at a crossroads and needed U.S. economic and political aid. He decided Pakistan should reject radical Islamism and move back toward secularism and closer relations with the United States in order to secure aid and prevent the United States from moving closer to India. Already, the United States was being offered bases by India to fight the war on terrorism, and Musharraf did not want to be out-manuevered. He decided to allow the United States to enter Pakistani bases and use them to launch attacks on the Taliban and al Qaeda. Musharraf began to reorient Pakistan's security establishment by purging the armed forces and ISI of those who had managed the previous policy of consorting with Islamist radicals in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Kashmir.

After an attack by Islamist terrorists on the Indian parliament on December 13, 2001, Indian and U.S. pressure led Musharraf to offer, in a speech delivered on January 12, 2002, support in combating cross-border terrorism from Pakistan into Indian-controlled Jammu and Kashmir. However, Musharraf has found it difficult to follow through on his

commitments to India's satisfaction without risking his own position within Pakistan. Pressures on Musharraf by India and the United States have continued and saber rattling and the prospect of a nuclear exchange have mounted.

The focus of this chapter is on international rivals to the United States from within Pakistan. The approach is to provide background and understanding on the development of these rivals and the Pakistani government's ability to cope with them. The rivals are described, profiled, and analyzed and the degree of threat that these groups pose to the United States and its allies in Pakistan is assessed. At issue is whether or not Pakistan will collapse into anarchy, which would serve the interests of al Qaeda and other U.S. rivals. A related issue is whether or not al Qaeda and other radical Islamist groups will escalate war in Kashmir and attempt to cause a nuclear exchange between Pakistan and India, which would also hurt U.S. interests. Particular attention is paid to anti-U.S. factions within Pakistan and what the Musharraf government is doing to contain them. In assessing whether or not the Pakistani government can cope with rivals, the chapter provides a profile of President Musharraf.

## **The Rise of Rivals to the United States in Pakistan**

Pakistan was established in 1947 as a state that promised Muslims a safe haven from the persecution that many had suffered at the hands of Hindus in British-ruled India. Pakistan was founded as a secular state that was predominantly Muslim, with largely secular political parties. Soon after independence, Pakistani forces invaded Jammu and Kashmir, attempting to annex the predominantly Muslim principality. However, the Indian army stopped Pakistani forces after they had seized half of the territory but not the main population center in the "Vale of Kashmir" and the capital, Srinagar.

Since the 1947 conflict over Kashmir, Pakistan and India have remained enemies and have fought four wars, most recently in Kargil along the "Line of Control" in Kashmir. In the 1950s, Pakistan established close relations with the United States as a partner in the Cold War. With the majority of the population from the Punjab Province and a fairly strong

landed and political elite, Pakistan was a fairly stable state for the first 30 years. In the 1950s and 1960s, the military seized and held on to power but eventually handed authority back to civilians. The one great exception to the stability rule was the 1971 secession of East Pakistan and creation of Bangladesh with the help of an Indian invasion.<sup>1</sup>

In the first decade of independence, the largely secular Muslim League dominated Pakistan's politics. The first Islamist challenge came from the Jamaat-e-Islami (Islamist Party), which contested the 1951 general election and has competed in every subsequent general election, except the one in 1997, which it boycotted.<sup>2</sup> The Jamaat-e-Islami was founded in 1941 as one of the first Islamic revivalist movements in the world. The party led the campaign for the Islamization of politics and society and the grounding of the constitution and institutions in Islamic law. The Jamaat-e-Islami has had a large component of Mojahirs, who came from India especially to the Karachi region, Sind Province with the 1947 partition. They associated with the Islamist party and ideology as a way of competing for their rights with native Sindhis, who supported Zulifkar Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP). In 1950, the more puritanical and factional Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islami (Islamist Scholars and Priests Party) was founded.

From the 1950s onward, the Jamaat-e-Islami and Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islami opposed Pakistan's alliance with the United States. In the early 1990s, the Jamaat-e-Islami and Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islami supported Saddam Hussein and Iraq in the Gulf War and vigorously opposed Pakistan's support of the United States in the war. The Jamaat-e-Islami and Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islami remain rivals of the United States.

In 1977, the Pakistan National Alliance was formed to oppose the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and the Prime Minister Zulifkar Bhutto in the March general elections. A faction of the Pakistan Muslim League joined with Islamist parties including the Jamaat-e-Islami and more puritanical parties, such as the Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islami (Islamist Scholars and Priests Party) and the Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Pakistan (Pakistan Scholars and Priests Party). After the elections were rigged, the Islamist parties agitated against Bhutto and his regime to bring redress.

After a political crisis, General Zia ul-Haq led the military in overthrowing the Bhutto government and then saw to Bhutto's execution. Once in power, Zia became determined to remain there and, as a devout

Muslim, Islamize Pakistan. He adopted a number of initiatives to strengthen his position, Islamize government and politics, and weaken the established secular political order. Zia developed the ISI into a super intelligence agency with its own troops and the power to delve into domestic and international affairs. His Islamization package included the massive expansion of madrassas. By the 1990s, there were more than 40,000, with less than 5,000 registered.<sup>3</sup> They tended to define jihad in their instruction as Islamist guerrilla warfare and extremism, rather than the traditional definition of striving to become better Muslims. Subsequently, the Islamists became known as jihadis.<sup>4</sup>

Zia eased restrictions on Islamist movements and political parties and included Jamaat-e-Islami leaders in his cabinet.<sup>5</sup> He cultivated conservative, literal-minded Islamist elements that wanted to create a puritanical Islamist order. At the same time, Zia exercised control over Islamist parties and did not allow them to control policy matters outside of Islamic affairs.<sup>6</sup>

Zia opened the military and bureaucracy to Islamist activists. Ruling generals openly declared that they were Islamist in orientation and cultivated close ties with Islamist parties. Zia and his fellow generals represented a new wave of Pakistani officers who consciously moved away from western influences after the 1971 defeat in East Pakistan.<sup>7</sup> The 1979 Iranian revolution had a profound impact on military and civilian leaders alike and spurred on Islamization. Some even talked of an Islamic revolution in Pakistan.<sup>8</sup>

After the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979, the United States aided Zia's regime, as Pakistan became the principal ally in the war against Soviet occupation. The United States reversed its previous course toward Pakistan, dropped nonproliferation and human rights sanctions, and permitted Zia to develop a nuclear weapons program to counter India.

From 1979 onward, three million Afghans settled in Pakistani refugee camps and became the basis for the Mujahideen and, in the early 1990s, the Taliban. In the 1980s, the ISI and CIA worked together to aid the Islamist Mujahideen in Afghanistan in a jihad against the Soviet Union. In the 1980s, the CIA and ISI worked with the Jamaat-e-Islami in Pakistan and the Afghan Hezb-e-Islami, led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, as arms were shipped primarily to the Ghilzai Pushtun in central and northeast Pakistan.<sup>9</sup>

Zia supported not only the Mujahideen in Afghanistan, but also the ISI and the Jamaat-e-Islami backed Islamist militants in Pakistan and the Islamist fighters in Kashmir. The fighting in Afghanistan spilled over into Kashmir and touched off a wave of violence. The ISI's links to the religious-political organizations under Zia increased not only because he used religion to legitimize his rule, but also because the organizations were essential for recruiting to the ranks of the Mujahideen. The ISI built up links with fundamentalist parties such as the Jamaat-e-Islami and its offshoots, the Tableghi Jamaat (Evangelists Organization) and Markaz Dawa-al Irshad (Islamic Missionaries Organization - an Islamic fundamentalist grouping of Wahabi sects in Pakistan). This interaction allowed the Islamist parties in Pakistan to extend influence over armed forces personnel.<sup>10</sup>

During the 1980s, the United States and Saudi Arabia funneled more than \$3.5 billion into Pakistan and Afghanistan. Pakistan cultivated close ties to Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Cooperation Council states. Wahabi groups from Saudi Arabia funded the Mujahideen, and Arab fighters, including Osama bin Laden, arrived in Pakistan and formed the basis for al Qaeda there. From 1987-88 alone, \$25 million was contributed by private Saudi sources, including Osama bin Laden, to the Mujahideen. Private funding began to flow from Saudi Arabia, especially from Wahabi groups, to Pakistan and particularly to madrassas.<sup>11</sup>

In the 1980s, Zia encouraged the growth of militant Islamist groups that could rival the mass base of the PPP. These groups included Mohajirs, who challenged native Sindhis and the PPP in the Karachi region. Other groups were associated with Sunni Islam mainline sects, and others included the Wahabi/Deobandi sect and Shia sects. Contention between Shiite groups on the one hand and on the other Wahabi/Deobandi and mainline Sunni groups resulted in massive sectarian violence.

For example, the 1980 imposition of an Islamic Zakat tax led to sectarian violence between the Shia, who resisted the tax, and the Wahabi/Deobandi sect, which was violently anti-Shiite. Also, the Wahabi/Deobandi sect has been opposed to inequality and feudalism and has strong beliefs in egalitarianism for men and sequestering women. In 1985, the Anjuman Sipah-e-Sahaba was formed as a breakaway from the Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islami and resorted to violence in pursuance of its Islamist sectarian agenda, killing more than 3,600 Shiites over the next decade or more.<sup>12</sup>

## **1988-1999: The Rise of the Taliban, Al Qaeda, and U.S. Rivals**

Zia ul-Haq died in a plane crash in 1988, but the damage had already been done by his rule to Pakistan's stability and secularism. He had strengthened the ISI and the military's dominance over politics and government. Zia had encouraged the growth of Islamist parties and groups in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Kashmir. Subsequently, Pakistan's politics and society became more divided and unstable, as Islamist groups began to fight secularism and as Sunnis fought Shiites. In 1989, the United States turned away from Pakistan after the end of the Afghanistan war, and Pakistan pressed on to complete its nuclear weapons program.

In 1988, the secular Pakistan Muslim League and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) returned as the two dominant governing parties. The PPP returned to power and Benazir Bhutto became the Prime Minister. Soon afterward, the ISI worked to undermine the Bhutto government and unified the opposition to the PPP around the Muslim League in the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad, including Islamist parties such as the Jamaat-e-Islami and the Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islami.

Nawaz Sharif and the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI) came to power for the first time in 1990. During the same period, the Jamaat-e-Islami, Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islami, and other anti-U.S. forces in the government opposed U.S. intervention in the Gulf War and the Sharif government's support of the United States. The U.S. presence in Saudi Arabia from 1990 onward inspired the creation of al Qaeda, as well as anti-Americanism among Pakistani Islamist groups.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, while the Mujahideen were fighting the Soviets and the Najibullah regime in Afghanistan, the Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islami was helping to create the Taliban in the region around Quetta, Baluchistan and in the NorthWest Frontier Province. The Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islami built a support base among Durrani Pushtun refugees who originated from the Kandahar region in southern Afghanistan. The establishment of madrassas was a key element, as militants in the Jamaat-e-Ulema-i-Islami, who were part of the Deobandi sect, passed their beliefs on to the Taliban students in the madrassas. The Taliban became even more extreme in their beliefs, especially in regard to women and Shiites. The future leaders of the Taliban, including

Mohamed Omar, fought against the Najibullah regime after the Soviets left in 1988. In 1992, the Mujahideen overthrew the Najibullah regime, and many future Taliban returned to Pakistan (especially around Quetta) to take advantage of the madrassas of the Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islami for themselves and their families.<sup>13</sup>

In the 1980s, President Zia supported Kashmiri militant groups who, after his death, launched a military and terrorist campaign and escalated the level of violence there. In 1989, the Kashmir conflict escalated, with the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) fighting for independence from India and Pakistan. In 1994, the Yasin Malik faction of the JKLF voluntarily ceased firing and disarmed.

By 1993, pro-Pakistani movements had replaced pro-independence movements and were sustaining the conflict. They were based in Pakistan, trained in Afghanistan, motivated by pan-Islamist fundamentalism, and filled with Pushtuns, Arabs, Punjabis, and Afghans (an estimated 40% of the fighters were not Kashmiris). Two of the most prominent of the Pakistani-based groups that became active in Kashmir were Harakat-ul-Ansar (Islamic Helpers Group) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (Army of the Pure). In 2000, the Jaish-e-Muhammad (Army of Muhammad) burst upon the scene as another major group.

Harakat-ul-Ansar was established as in the mid-1980s and changed its name to Harakat ul-Mujahideen, Islamic Freedom Fighters Group, after 1995 when the State Department listed Harakat-ul-Ansar as a terrorist group. Associated with the Islamist Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islami and its leader, Maulana Fazlur Rahman, the Harakat was originally based in Pakistan, operated from Afghanistan, and had several thousand armed supporters in Pakistan and Kashmir, including Afghan and Arab veterans of the 1979-1988 Afghan war. Harakat members have also participated in insurgent and terrorist operations in Burma, Tajikistan, and Bosnia. In 2000, many Harakat members joined a new organization, Jaish-e-Muhammad.<sup>14</sup>

Lashkar-e-Taiba was founded in 1980 as the military wing of the well-funded Pakistani Islamist organization Markaz-ad-Dawa-wal-Irshad of Wahabi sects, which recruited volunteers to fight alongside the Taliban in Afghanistan. Almost all of Lashkar-e-Taiba's several hundred members have been non-Kashmiris and have been schooled in madrassas. Some have been Afghan war veterans. After launching operations in 1993, the



Lashkar-e-Taiba became the most brutal terrorist group in Jammu and Kashmir, killing large numbers of civilians. Headed by Mohammed Latif, the Lashkar-e-Taiba has operated in the Srinagar Valley and the districts of Poonch, Rajauri and Doda. Its training camps have been located at Kotli, Sialkot, and Samani in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir. Its professed ideology goes beyond merely challenging India's sovereignty over Jammu and Kashmir. The Lashkar's agenda has been outlined in a pamphlet titled, *Why Are We Waging Jihad?* It includes a call for the restoration of Islamic rule over all parts of India, as well as Israel, Ethiopia, Spain, Hungary, and Russia.<sup>15</sup>

In October 1993, the PPP and Benazir Bhutto returned to power. In striving to build a majority coalition, the secularist Bhutto turned to the Islamist Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islami and its leader, Maulana Fazlur Rahman. Upon joining the PPP coalition, Fazlur Rahman became Chairman of the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs. He made numerous trips to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States to seek financial and military help for the Taliban. He arranged hunting trips for Arab princes to Kandahar, where they made their first contacts with the Taliban.<sup>16</sup>

As the Taliban advanced in Afghanistan in 1994 and 1995, the Pakistan security establishment jumped on the bandwagon. Two Islamists, Interior Minister Naserullah Babar and ISI head Lieutenant General Javed Nasir, led the way in siding with the Taliban. In 1995, a coup attempt led by an Islamist general, Zaheer-ul-Islam Abbasi, enhanced fears of the penetration of religious extremists into the ISI and Pakistani military at the lower and middle levels.<sup>17</sup>

In 1996, the Taliban took control of Kabul and most of Afghanistan. Afterward, Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda decided to relocate their headquarters from Khartoum, Sudan to Afghanistan. The Taliban supported their former Islamist patrons in Pakistan and Kashmir. The Bhutto government's initial enthusiasm for the Taliban was tempered when, by 1997, only Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates had recognized the new regime. The extremism of the Taliban and its invitation to al Qaeda to base itself in Afghanistan were off-putting to many states.

As the Taliban advanced, the Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islami inherited camps used to train the Taliban, as well as al Qaeda fighters, for the jihad in Afghanistan. Pakistani Islamist militant groups used the camps to train

a new generation of fighters. For example, the Harakat ul-Ansar trained recruits in Camp Badr near Khost on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border and sent the fighters to Kashmir, Chechnya, and Yugoslavia.<sup>18</sup> In 1995, the Harakat-ul-Ansar kidnapped four Western tourists, including one American, in Kashmir and killed them, which was a sign of rising Pakistani anti-Americanism. In response to the killings, the United States named the Harakat-ul-Ansar a terrorist organization, which subsequently changed its name to the Harakat ul-Mujahideen.

In February 1997, Prime Minister Bhutto, the PPP, and the Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islami lost power to Nawaz Sharif and the Pakistan Muslim League-led coalition. However, the Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islami had already helped launch the Taliban and helped put it in control of most of Afghanistan, and the Taliban and al Qaeda returned the favor by offering its support to the Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islami and related groups.

When Nawaz Sharif and the Pakistan Muslim League-led coalition returned to power, the Jamaat-e-Islami refused to return as part of the coalition, having become more radical and revivalist and rejecting the corruption of secular politics. The Jamaat-e-Islami created and was supporting the Kashmir-based Hizb-ul Mujahideen (Freedom Fighters Movement) to fight for Islamism. It was becoming one of the largest groups fighting in Jammu and Kashmir.

In May 1998, the Sharif government decided to conduct a nuclear weapons test in response to India's test earlier in the month. Subsequently, the fear of an "Islamic bomb" rose in some quarters in Israel and the West. Also, the fear of al Qaeda obtaining weapons of mass destruction grew. In August 1998, the United States launched cruise missiles attacks on al Qaeda bases on the Afghan-Pakistan border near Khost and in other locations in retaliation for the bombing of U.S. Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The attacks killed Pakistani Islamist fighters, which led to an escalation of anti-Americanism inside Pakistan.

In early 1999, General Musharraf launched the Kargil operation to test India's resolve in Jammu and Kashmir, particularly with both countries in possession of nuclear weapons. Radical Islamist fighters from the Harakat-ul-Mujahideen and Lashkar-e-Taiba played in the Kargil operation, fighting alongside Pakistani troops. After weeks of fighting and the possibility of a nuclear exchange, India was able to repel the incursion by July 1999.

## **1999-2001: General Musharraf's Coup and the High Water Mark for U.S. Rivals**

In October 1999, General Pervez Musharraf, Pakistani Army Chief of Staff, took power in a bloodless coup. He had taken hawkish positions in 1998, when Pakistan tested nuclear weapons for the first time and, in the first half of 1999, when he sent troops and insurgents into Indian-held territory in the Kargil war. General Musharraf led the coup against the elected government of Prime Minister Sharif, who was suspected of being too dovish in relations with India and who conspired to dispose of General Musharraf while the latter was flying back from a meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Once in power, it was expected that General Musharraf would intensify the struggle against India over Kashmir by aiding Islamist militant groups and would move Pakistan toward the brink of confrontation with India, including the prospect of nuclear war. Until September 11, 2001, this scenario seemed to be unfolding.

The profile of Pervez Musharraf is one of a Western-influenced professional military officer, who also is a strong Pakistani nationalist but not an Islamist. Musharraf was born in Delhi, became a Mohajir, having immigrated with his parents to Pakistan after partition in 1947, and comes from a middle class Urdu-speaking family in Karachi. He spent his early childhood in Turkey (1949-1956) owing to his father's posting as a diplomat to Ankara, and he claims that Kemal Ataturk, that country's secular modernizer, is his hero. Returning to Pakistan, he attended Saint Patrick's High School and Forman Christian College. His mother worked for the International Labor Organization, and Musharraf has taken relatively progressive stands toward women.

His military education included Pakistan Military Academy, Command and Staff College, National Defence College, and the Royal College of Defence Studies in the United Kingdom. He fought in the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965 as a young officer and was awarded the Imtiaz Sanad for gallantry. He volunteered to be a commando and remained in the Special Services Group for seven years. He also participated in the Indo-Pakistan War of 1971 as a company commander in the Commando Battalion.<sup>19</sup>

From the 1960s to the 1990s, General Musharraf rose through the ranks, despite the fact that he did not belong to the predominantly Punjabi

officer class of the Pakistani army. In fact, Prime Minister Sharif promoted Musharraf to the most powerful military position in 1998 because Sharif believed that Musharraf did not have a base of support among the Punjabi officer class.<sup>20</sup>

On December 25, 1999, four Pakistani Islamists hijacked an Indian Airlines flight from Katmandu, Nepal to Kandahar. They killed a passenger and demanded the release of 36 terrorists in Indian jails in exchange for the passengers. Indian authorities ultimately gave up three terrorists, Maulana Masood Azhar, Ahmed Omar Sayed Sheikh and Mustaq Ahmed Zargar. Masood Azhar reportedly had fought in Somalia against U.S. troops in 1993 and proceeded to found the Pakistani terrorist organization Jaish-e-Muhammad in February 2000 that would bomb the Jammu and Kashmir assembly on October 1, 2001, killing 36 persons. Omar Sayed Sheikh had served five years in an Indian prison for kidnapping Westerners, became a prominent member of Jaish-i-Muhammad, and went on to kidnap Daniel Pearl in January 2002.

In July 2000, Abdul Majeed Dar, the leader of Hizb-ul-Mujahideen agreed to a cease-fire with the Indian army in Jammu and Kashmir coinciding with the visit of Jamaat-e-Islami leader, Ameer Qazi Hussain Ahmed, to the United States. However, the Muttahida Jihad Council of 14 jihadi groups refused to cease-fire. On August 1-2, 2000, the Lashkar-e-Taiba began a series of massacres, which spread over three districts of Jammu and Kashmir and led to the killing of more than 100 persons within a space of 24 hours.<sup>21</sup>

In October 2000, after the bombing of the USS Cole, the Clinton administration approached General Musharraf to assist in arresting and extraditing Osama bin Laden. However, Musharraf refused to serve as an intermediary for the extradition of bin Laden. The reluctance of Musharraf indicated that, before September 11, 2001, the position of al Qaeda and other U.S. rivals in Pakistan was fairly strong. The ISI continued to support several Islamist groups and al Qaeda enjoyed a degree of popular support in Pakistan.

In July 2001, General Musharraf named himself president in a bid to consolidate his grip on power. He went to India and held his first summit meeting with Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee at Agra. However, the two failed to make much headway in resolving the Kashmir dispute.

## **Post-September 11, 2001**

After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the United States identified Taliban-ruled Afghanistan as the major target in the war on terrorism. The greatest challenge confronting the United States was how to gain access to land-locked Afghanistan, especially for U.S. air power. The only realistic avenue was through Pakistan. With some uncertainty, the Bush administration approached President Musharraf. The offer of economic aid and an end to some sanctions helped lead to his about face and the offer of overflight rights. However, before Musharraf could allow U.S. forces into Pakistani bases to attack al Qaeda and the Taliban, he first had to remove opposition within his own armed forces and especially the ISI.

Musharraf began a clampdown on Islamist generals and groups in Pakistan. With the start of U.S. military operations in Pakistan and Afghanistan on October 7, 2001, Musharraf carried out a shakeup of the military. He reshuffled the army, retiring the pro-Taliban ISI chief, Lieutenant General Mahmood Ahmed, and appointed the former Corps Commander in Peshawar, Lieutenant General Eshanul Haq, as Director General of the ISI. General Musharraf also retired Deputy Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General M. H. Usmani, an Islamist tabligi (evangelist). Musharraf's differences with Lieutenant General Mohammed Aziz Khan, an Islamist and Taliban supporter, led the former to promote the latter from the powerful post of Commander IV Corps, Lahore, to the largely ceremonial post of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Committee. All three generals had been strong supporters of Musharraf in the 1999 coup against Prime Minister Sharif.<sup>22</sup>

A most significant change was the removal from the ISI of Lieutenant General Ahmed, who was supportive of and ethnically linked to the Taliban. He had provided covert support for jihadi activity from within the Pakistani military. During the September 11 attacks, Ahmed was in the United States. In October, President Musharraf sent Ahmed as the head of a delegation of Pakistani religious leaders to Afghanistan to negotiate the surrender of Osama bin Laden. Instead of asking for Bin Laden to be handed over unconditionally, Ahmed lauded the efforts of Taliban chief

Muhammad Omar in his fight against the United States and urged him to resist demands to hand over bin Laden.<sup>23</sup>

Another key move was the promotion of Lieutenant General Mohammed Aziz Khan to the largely ceremonial post of Chairman of the JCS. Aziz was a Punjabi-speaking Pathan (Pushtun) from Pakistan-administered Kashmir, who graduated from the British Royal Staff College. He shared the late President/General Zia ul-Haq's vision of a pan-Islamic state that would include Afghanistan and the Central Asian republics. As assistant director general of the ISI, Aziz was linked with the Taliban's push into Afghanistan in 1996 and had close dealings with its leadership and that of Islamist groups inside Pakistan.<sup>24</sup>

The Musharraf government moved to quash Islamist leaders who opposed his policy switch. On October 16, 2001, the Pakistan government charged Jamiat-Ulema-e-Islami leader Maulana Fazlur Rahman with sedition. He was accused of spurring violent protests against the U.S.-led attacks on Afghanistan and placed under house arrest. Sipah-i-Sahaba's chief, Maulana Azam Tariq, was also placed under house arrest. The Jamaat-e-Islami leader, Ameer Qazi Hussain Ahmed, was arrested and jailed. At the end of February 2002, he was released from prison and resumed his campaign of denunciation against President Musharraf. In May 2002, he publicly demanded Musharraf's resignation.

Also in October 2002, two Islamist nuclear scientists, Sultan Bashiruddin Mahmood and Abdul Majid, were arrested after they had visited al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden in August 2001 in Kabul, Afghanistan. They had conducted long discussions with bin Laden about nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, according to Pakistani officials familiar with the interrogations of the men who were described as "very motivated" and "extremist in their ideas."<sup>25</sup>

Mahmood and Majid had used an Afghan relief organization, the Ummah Tameer-e-Nau, and a humanitarian mission as a cover to conduct secret talks with bin Laden. They reported that bin Laden indicated that he had radiological material acquired for him by the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. The scientists said they left the meetings believing that bin Laden had such material and that he had asked them how the material could be made into a weapon. They told him it would not be possible to manufacture a weapon with the material he had. The two scientists were

eventually released in December 2001, but their case illustrated the dangers of Pakistani proliferation to U.S. rivals.<sup>26</sup>

The Islamists struck back at the emerging anti-terrorist coalition through Pakistani Islamists who operated in Jammu and Kashmir. On October 1, 2001, the Pakistani terrorist organization Jaish-e-Muhammad bombed the Jammu and Kashmir assembly, killing 36 persons. On December 13, 2001, Islamist militants attacked the Indian parliament. Indian authorities blamed the Jaish-e-Muhammad and the Lashkar-i-Jhangvi (Army of Mullah Jhangvi, headed by the Karachi financier Riaz Basra), backed by Pakistan and the ISI. In response, the Indian army mobilized and 700,000 troops moved toward the front line. President Musharraf countered by ordering 300,000 Pakistani troops to the front. On January 12, 2002, after considerable pressure from the United States and India, Musharraf gave a speech condemning cross-border terrorism and promised to stop it. Hundreds of suspected Islamist militants and fighters were arrested and detained. The U.S. government placed the Jaish-e-Muhammad and the Lashkar-i-Jhangvi on its list of international terrorists.

On January 23, 2002, Daniel Pearl was kidnapped by Ahmed Omar Sayed Sheikh and his Jaish-e-Muhammad associates in Karachi. The journalist was actually guarded and executed by Naeem Bukhari and his associates, who belonged to Lashkar-i-Jhangvi.<sup>27</sup> A Pakistani intelligence officer, Brigadier Abdullah, played a key role in nurturing the Jaish-e-Muhammad after its formation in 2000 and also helped facilitate Sheikh's frequent travels between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The intelligence officer was among those who were pushed aside as President Musharraf began his shake-up of ISI in October 2001.<sup>28</sup>

On March 17, 2002, the Lashkar-e-Omar (Army of Mohamed Omar) attacked an Anglican church in Islamabad, killing two Americans. In late March, a raid by Pakistani police and FBI agents in Faisalabad, Punjab Province, resulted in the capture of Abu Zubaida, the highest-ranking al Qaeda operative to be apprehended since the September 11 attacks in the United States. More than two dozen other al Qaeda members and a large number of computer disks were seized in the raid. The arrest was yet another sign that al Qaeda had infiltrated into Pakistani cities. Subsequently, Abu Zubaida has provided U.S. intelligence and law enforcement agencies with considerable information about al Qaeda.

By late March 2002, Musharraf had released many of the Islamist militants, who had been arrested in January. He was accused of using legal loopholes to release the militants. Previously, he had rounded them up under the Maintenance of Public Order Act, which had loopholes. Not one militant had been charged under the Anti-terrorism Act that had been amended with stronger penal provisions to curb religious extremists. A little over a month after the crackdown, the head of Pakistan's Interior Ministry's Crisis Management Cell, Brigadier Javed Iqbal Cheema said he was planning to release more than 2,000 suspected militants. They belonged to five banned groups, including Jaish-i-Muhammad and Lashkar-i-Jhangvi, who were believed to be responsible for the attack on the Indian Parliament on December 13, 2001.<sup>29</sup>

In Spring 2002, President Musharraf moved to further consolidate power. In March, he promoted 47 Brigadiers to Major General, which was a sign that civilians were being squeezed out of top positions and that military leaders who President Musharraf trusted were being put in their place. At the end of April, Musharraf staged a referendum on his presidency, which he won overwhelmingly, but which was not free and fair. Anticipating general elections in October 2002, Musharraf banned former prime ministers Bhutto and Sharif from contesting and has situated himself to remain in power.

An increasing number of retired and serving generals continue to espouse the cause of Islamism, support for jihadis, and oppose President Musharraf. These include General Aslam Beg (former Chief of Army Staff), Lieutenant-General Hamid Gul (former ISI chief), Lieutenant-General Javed Nasir (former ISI chief), Lieutenant-General Mohammed Ahmed (former ISI chief), and Lieutenant-General Mohammed Aziz, current Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS).<sup>30</sup>

In Spring 2000, the U.S. and coalition partners launched Operation Anaconda and other operations. U.S. personnel joined Pakistani troops in a hunt for al-Qaeda and Taliban fugitives in the North Waziristan semi-autonomous tribal area. It was the first time that foreign troops had landed in the area, where even the Pakistan Army had not been allowed to operate since independence in 1947. The hunt centered on Spin Wam, just 15 miles from the eastern Afghan province of Khost, which was the main center of operations of the U.S.-led coalition forces against the last vestiges of al Qaeda in Spring 2002. Pakistani and American officials



suspected that Osama bin Laden and his men were hiding in the Waziristan tribal area, where the former Afghan Taliban regime had strong support.

Pakistani troops aided by U.S. personnel began combing the area, finding weapons but no terrorists. They angered tribesmen when they raided an Islamic seminary established by Jalaluddin Haqani, a former commander of Taliban forces. Pakistani tribesmen were being urged by their religious leaders to kill American soldiers.

About 200 Pakistani soldiers accompanied by a dozen American soldiers broke through the sprawling compound of the madrassa outside Miran Shah, headquarters of the North Waziristan tribal area, about 12 miles from the Afghan border, after reports that it was being used by al Qaeda as a hideout. Once a center for Islamic learning for the Afghan Taliban in the early 1990s, the madrassa was closed by the Pakistani authorities in December 2001 but later handed over to the local Islamic leaders. In a separate raid, a joint Pakistani and American team held the chief of another madrassa on suspicion of being an al Qaeda member. Pakistan, General Ehsan ul-Haq, and the ISI won praise from the United States for its support in the war on terrorism, particularly in rounding up more than 300 Qaeda members in Spring 2002.<sup>31</sup>

In recent months, Pakistani cities have filled with U.S. rivals, and terror attacks have pointed to worrisome links between local extremists and fugitive al Qaeda leaders who had filtered across the country into major cities. Hundreds of al Qaeda operatives who fled Afghanistan found refuge in Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and Quetta. Their hosts have been Islamist militants who have joined forces with bin Laden's organization. Connections between Pakistani militants and al Qaeda foreigners increased al Qaeda's effectiveness. Bomb attacks in Karachi against the U.S. consulate and the French defense workers showed great planning and sophistication.

On June 14, 2002, a new Islamist group, al Qanoon (the Law), claimed responsibility for a suicide attack on the U.S. Consulate in Karachi. Most likely, al Qaeda plotted the attack. An ISI official said that signs pointed toward an al Qaeda link and an intensified collaboration between al Qaeda and indigenous terrorist groups, such as the Sunni Muslim extremist group Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. Pakistan's Interior Ministry estimated this year that the trained members of just five of the country's militant groups numbered 5,000. "Terror could hit the president, or anyone."<sup>32</sup>

In May 2002, reports emerged about Harka al-Jahad al-Islami, (Army of the Islamic Holy War) one of Pakistan's biggest jihadi militia, which had been headquartered in Kandahar. In Pakistan, very few had known the name of the outfit and its leader, Qari Saifullah Akhtar. A large number of its fighters made their way into Central Asia and Chechnya to escape capture at the hands of the Americans, while the rest stole back into Pakistan to establish themselves in Waziristan and Buner. Their military training camp (maskar) in Kotli in Azad Kashmir swelled with new fighters and the outfit has been scouting areas in the Northwest Frontier Province to create a supplementary maskar for jihad in Kashmir. It joined with Harkat-ul-Mujahideen to create Jamiat-ul-Mujahideen in order to cut the number of groups gathered together in Pakistan-held Azad Kashmir.<sup>33</sup>

In May 2002, three men were arrested for firing rockets toward the air base used by U.S. troops outside the southern Pakistan city of Jacobabad. They were identified as members of Sipah Sahaba Pakistan, a banned Sunni Muslim group. Implicated were both Sipah Sahaba Pakistan and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, which had previously focused on attacking Pakistani Shiites, rather than Westerners.<sup>34</sup>

In May 2002, Islamist groups resumed their activities in Jammu and Kashmir after the snow on mountain passes had melted. Resulting tensions with India impaired Pakistan's ability to station troops and operate patrols along the border with Afghanistan, where American officials appear to have focused most of their concern.

On May 14, 2002, jihadi groups sent guerrillas from Pakistan's part of Kashmir into India's portion on a raid on an Indian army camp that led to the deaths of 34 people.<sup>35</sup> The incident brought the nuclear-armed neighbors to the brink of all-out war, which could have killed millions. The incident underscored the fact that field commanders rather than President Musharraf control Pakistan's nuclear forces.<sup>36</sup>

In the October 2002 elections, Islamist political parties made major gains in parliament. They also gained control of government structures in Baluchistan and North West frontier provinces. The Islamists are now a major political force in Pakistan.

## **Conclusions**

This chapter has demonstrated that Pakistan is filled with some of the most dangerous international rivals that could harm U.S. interests in a number of ways. These rivals are Islamists, many of whom are prepared to die for their cause. Many have been schooled in Wahabi madrassas, to wage jihad against the United States, the West, India, and against secularism in Pakistan. They belong to a variety of groups and most are linked to al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. The psychological profile of the leaders of these groups and their followers is similar to that of bin Laden and those who destroyed the World Trade Center and attacked the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. They have a burning resentment against all things Western and believe that dying for the cause is necessary and even desirable. They confirm that non-state actors, like Osama bin Laden, can be just as dangerous for the United States as Saddam Hussein or other heads of state.

Thus far, Islamist rivals to the United States in Pakistan have attacked soft targets with some sophistication. It is likely that these attacks will continue and will provide a disincentive for U.S. companies and non-governmental organizations that would like to operate in Pakistan. It is very difficult for the Pakistan government, backed by U.S. authorities, to root out Islamist groups that are filled with hundreds or thousands of fanatics and with more madrassa-trained volunteers waiting in the wings.

The greatest danger for the United States in Pakistan stems from efforts by Islamist groups to precipitate nuclear war between India and Pakistan over Jammu and Kashmir and to overthrow the governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan. The recent crisis between India and Pakistan demonstrates that additional Islamist attacks on Indian targets will bring Indian retaliation that could spiral into nuclear war, kill 12 to 15 million people, and devastate U.S. interests. A few thousand determined U.S. rivals could destroy the sub-continent and block international economic activity for decades to come.

Another danger is Pakistan-based Islamists helping to overthrow the U.S.-backed Afghan government of President Hamid Karzai. The present government is fragile and susceptible to attacks from various tribal

warlords inside Afghanistan, who could be backed by Islamist allies in Pakistan. Thus far, U.S. and Pakistani forces have prevented Pakistani-based Islamists from linking up with their Afghan counterparts as they did during the anti-Soviet and Taliban wars. However, the border is so difficult to patrol that links will eventually be restored. If Karzai is overthrown, the door will be open for al Qaeda to return and to restore operations, including WMD development.

A third danger is for Islamists to join forces with sympathizers in the military in overthrowing the Musharraf government and moving Pakistan back in an anti-U.S. direction. If Islamists gained control of the government, they could shut down much of the U.S. war against terrorism, intensify operations in Kashmir that could lead to nuclear war, and help the Taliban to return to power in Afghanistan. An Islamist regime in Pakistan would most likely proliferate WMD and become part of the “axis of evil.”

President Musharraf has done everything to prevent such a scenario, purging the military and ISI, clamping down on Islamist leaders and groups, and fortifying his own position as president and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. He has also moved carefully on the Kashmir issue, trying not to inflame public opinion against him. Musharraf will manage the October elections and the aftermath so that Pakistan does not return to the corrupt and divisive politics of the 1990s and Islamist groups are kept out of governing coalitions. Musharraf fits the profile of the “Ataturk of Pakistan.”

In the long run, Musharraf faces a more daunting task in trying to secularize Pakistan than Ataturk had in transforming Turkey. Pakistan must provide a public education system and jobs as an alternative to the *madrassas* and the Islamist groups. However, heavy defense spending and the weak state of the Pakistani economy pose major obstacles to such a path. Fifty percent of the Pakistani budget is consumed by debt servicing and defense expenditure. The external debt is about \$34 billion and internal debt is about 45% of GDP. In the 1990s the ratio of defense expenditure to health and education expenditure was 239:1. For Pakistan’s democratic and economic restructuring to succeed these numbers have to change. Otherwise, Pakistan will continue to be a major source of rivals to the United States.

## Notes

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11. "Saudi Arabia and Wahabism," *Issues in Foreign Affairs*, November 12, 2001, <http://www.issuesinforeignaffairs.com/past/2001-11-12/issue5.html>. Founded in the early 1700's by Mohamed Ibn Abd-al-Wahab, Wahabism preaches an uncompromising Islam. All other religions and sects of Islam are considered heretic. Foreign influences are considered to be prime evils. Wahabism is virulently anti-foreign and anti-West and forms the basis for the ideology of Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda.
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many Indians believe that Islamist terrorism is orchestrated by the Pakistani government and army and, particularly, by the ISI.

28. Douglas Jehl, "Death Of Reporter Puts Focus On Pakistan's Intelligence Unit" *New York Times*, February 25, 2002, 1.

29. John Wilson, "The Bigger Coup in Pakistan," *The Pioneer*, March 6, 2002. Pakistani foot-dragging on arresting Islamist militants was evident in an inquiry conducted in Sindh Province on the directives of the Interior Ministry of Pakistan, which came out with a report that none of the *madrassas* and mosques in the province had anything to do with *jihadis*. This was in direct contradiction of the intelligence reports that spoke of 500-odd mosques and *madrassas* suspected to be breeding grounds for *jihadis*. The similar pattern applies in Punjab province where more than 2,715 *madrassas* and mosques have a total enrolment of 250,000 students.

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